

writings as low as possible. They have labored with untiring industry and singular acuteness to prove that their theory is consistent with the facts. And yet, I suppose, that every one who knows anything of the recent history of criticism, would agree that this storm which threatened to blow our New Testament in pieces has spent its force, and that the New Testament remains very much as it was. Has then all this labor been in vain? Has all this attention been spent on the New Testament without result? Has the Augustan age of New Testament criticism passed away and left no solid monuments behind it? Most certainly not. The method of historical criticism remains, a new, more intelligent, and more truly scientific method of looking at the Apostolic writings. They are not now viewed as written in vacuo, and as if their contents might be understood and used apart from the circumstances which gave rise to them; but their slightest indications and allusions must be brought into harmony with the theory of their origin, and every jot and tittle shewn to be congruous with the history of the period which they belong. Besides this, although Baur's critical conclusions and those of his followers have frequently been erroneous, yet they have for the most part, been so plausible and maintained with so much scholarship, that, in order to demonstrate their insufficiency, scholarship as exact and criticism as searching have been required. The consequence is that in recent times the books of the New Testament have been examined with microscopic minuteness and attention to detail; every possible source of light has been again and again ransacked; every possible theory canvassed in the public debating-ground of European criticism, and nothing has been allowed to stand which is not thoroughly well-grounded in ascertained fact. To find any analogy to the ordeal through which the New Testament books have recently passed, one must turn from literature to physical science. No single book or series of books has ever exercised so many powerful minds or elicited so strenuous a criticism. And the gain to the student of the New Testament has been enormous. Never has there been a time when the authenticity of the Pauline epistles was so intelligently held. Not only has modern criticism failed to shake the Church's faith in the genuineness of these epistles, it has rather enabled the Church, as never before, to